

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION EA-13

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-10 NSCE-00 CIAE-00 INR-10

NSAE-00 RSC-01 SPC-01 SAM-01 PRS-01 PM-03 DODE-00 L-02

EUR-10 OMB-01 IO-03 DRC-01 /072 W

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R 010242Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO AMEMBASSY SEOUL

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 746

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

S E C R E T MANILA 1185

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, AS, KS, KN

SUBJECT: PRIME MINISTER WHITLAM'S INTEREST IN NORTH KOREA

REF: SEOUL'S 643

1. ON TWO OCCASIONS DURING ASSISTANT SECRETARY INGERSOLL'S VISIT TO MANILS, JAN 29-31, HE RAISED WITH FOREIGN SECRETARY ROMULO AUSTRALIAN PRIME MINISTER WHITLAM'S INTEREST IN ESTABLISHING RELATIONS WITH NORTH KOREA. SECRETARY INGERSOLL NOTED THE DIFFICULTIES THAT PRECIPITATE ACTION WOULD CAUSE SOUTH KOREA AND OTHER NATIONS IN ASIA. HE STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF TAKING

SUCH ACTION ONLY AFTER VERY CAREFUL APPRAISAL OF ITS CONSEQUENCES. AT THE VERY LEAST, RECOGNITION OF NORTH KOREA SHOULD BE CONSIDERED IN TERMS OF OBTAINING RECIPROCAL RECOGNITION FROM A COMMUNIST COUNTRY OF SOUTH KOREA. AS ONE OF THE MOST ASIAN COUNTRIES WHOSE GOOD RELATIONS AUSTRALIA VALUED, SECRETARY INGERSOLL CONCLUDED, THE PHILIPPINES SHOULD BE ABLE TO HELP GUIDE PRIME MINISTER WHITLAM ON THIS

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ISSUE.

2. SECRETARY ROMULO ON THE SECOND OCCASION ACKNOWLEDGED THAT PRIME MINISTER WHITLAM TENDED TO SHOOT FROM THE HIP. HE THOUGHT IT POSSIBLE THAT WHITLAM'S SUGGESTION WAS ONLY A TRIAL BALLOON BUT HE AGREED IN ANY EVENT TO MENTION PHILIPPINE CONCERN TO PRIME MINISTER WHITLAM DURING THE COURSE OF HIS VISIT TO MANILA FEB 10.

3. COMMENT: PHILIPPINES HAS TRADITIONALLY HAD GOOD IF NOT CLOSE RELATIONSHIPS WITH ROKG SINCE KOREAN WAR AND WE WOULD EXPECT GENERAL ROMULO TO BE SYMPATHETIC TO PROBLEM POSED TO SOUTH KOREA BY PRECIPITATE AUSTRALIAN RECOGNITION OF ITS NORTH KOREAN ENEMY. MOREOVER, SINCE INAUGURATION OF NIXON DOCTRINE IN 196.(GOP HAS BECOME INCREASINGLY ALIVE TO RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PHILIPPINE SECURITY AND ASIAN STABILITY. EFFORTS TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH ITS ASIAN NEIGHBORS, PARTICULARLY THOSE IN ASEAN, IN PAST YEAR OR TWO HAVE SHARP-

ENED THAT PERSPECTIVE. ALTHOUGH GOP MAY WELL SPEAK TO AUSTRALIAN PRIME MINISTER IN THIS REGARD DURING HIS VISIT, WE ASSUME ROKG IS ALSO AWARE THAT DURING PAST YEAR GOP HAS BEGUN TO OPEN RELATIONS WITH COMMUNIST COUNTRIES. OVERTURES INITIALLY DIRECTED AT SMALL EUROPEAN COMMUNIST STATES AND FOCUSSED LARGELY ON TRADE AND NON-RESIDENT TIES WERE SUPPLEMENTED IN 1973 BY CAUTIOUS EXPLORATION OF POSSIBLE TIES WITH PRC AND USSR. ENDEAVORS TO DATE MARKED BY PARTICULAR CARE AND APPRECIATION OF POTENTIAL THREAT TO PHILIPPINE SECURITY.

4. EVENTS IN PARACELS HAVE UNQUESTIONABLY HEIGHTENED GOP CONCERN WITH ITS SECURITY. WHILE PARALLEL BETWEEN CHINESE ACTION ON PARACELS AND NORTH KOREAN ACTION IN SOUTH KOREAN ISLANDS CAN BE OVERSTATED, IT COULD BE RELEVANT CONSIDERATION IF ROKG WISHES TO PURSUE MATTER FURTHER, DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY WITH PHILIPPINES.

5. EMBASSY SEOUL MAY WANT TO PASS SUBSTANCE OF ABOVE TO ROKG.
SULLIVAN

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NNN

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